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**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY****REGION 8****999 18TH STREET - SUITE 300****DENVER, CO 80202-2466****Phone 800-227-8917****<http://www.epa.gov/region08>**

August 22, 2003

Ref: 8EPR-SR

Mr. Jim Sighting
376 Doak Road
Libby, MT 59923

Dear Mr. Sighting:

Thank you for your patience awaiting my response to your July 10, 2003 letter. At the time of your letter, we had only inspected a few of the properties. We have since completed inspections at all of the properties. The purpose of the inspection was to identify potential sources of Libby asbestos, such a vermiculite attic insulation, and to collect soil and dust samples if necessary. The results of the inspections are below:

821 Louisiana Avenue
619 Main Avenue
1210 Nevada Avenue
761 E. 5th Street
765 E. 5th Street

For each of these properties, we identified vermiculite insulation in the attic. We collected indoor dust samples to determine if interior cleaning is necessary. We have not yet analyzed those dust samples. No vermiculite or other visible signs of contamination were found outdoors. We collected soil samples but have not analyzed them. Based on this information, the properties will require removal of attic insulation, may require interior cleaning (contingent upon dust sample results), and may require some outdoor soil cleanup (contingent upon soil sample results).

817 Louisiana Avenue

Vermiculite insulation was not observed in the attic. Trace amounts of vermiculite were observed in flowerbeds. Soil samples were collected from areas where vermiculite was not observed but have not yet been analyzed. Based on this information, the property will require cleanup of the flowerbeds and may require additional soil removal (contingent upon soil sample results).



133 White Avenue

Vermiculite insulation was observed in the attic. We collected indoor dust samples to determine if interior cleaning will be required but have not yet analyzed the samples. Vermiculite was also observed in the yard and driveway. Soil samples were collected from areas where vermiculite was not observed but have not yet been analyzed. Based on this information, the property will require cleanup of attic insulation, may require interior cleaning (contingent upon dust sample results), will require cleanup of the driveway and may require additional soil removal (contingent upon soil sample results).

Unfortunately, I am unable to provide a firm date for cleanup at this point. We have over 1300 properties that require cleanup and have only scheduled out for the next few months. We hope to improve our scheduling and notification over the next year. We also aim to complete all cleanup by approximately 2007. Over the next few years, we will systematically work through all of the investigation, design, and notification steps for all of these properties. Any cleanup performed by EPA will be at no cost to the owner, either current or future.

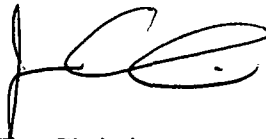
With regards to demolition of the houses, it is a possibility, but not a strong one. EPA will only consider this option if it is more economical to the government, which is usually not the case. Even if we demolish the home, there are many cleanup considerations we must meet, and adding fair market value to the equation greatly increases our overall cost. In nearly all situations, we are able to clean the property cheaper than it would cost to demolish it and compensate the owner. In certain situations, if the owner requests demolition *without* compensation, it may be advantageous to the government. We may also consider demolition if we feel the structure is unsafe for us to work in. We will consider your properties on a case by case basis as we work through the steps to get to cleanup.

I am not the person to answer your questions regarding taxes. I am unaware of any specific provisions regarding tax breaks or shelters for properties within Superfund sites, though such designation may affect property valuations. I recommend you consult a tax professional or attorney.

Lastly, you are correct, we did not notify all owners of our sampling. Our position is that consent for access from renters is sufficient for sampling, which is non-invasive. Tracking down owners would greatly slow down the sampling process. However, for any cleanup, we will negotiate all work plans and agreements with only the owner or owner's authorized representative. I hope this did not cause any inconvenience, but we feel it was the only practical approach to getting the work done as quickly as possible.

I hope this answers your questions. If you have any additional questions, or would like to speak to me directly, please contact the EPA Information Center at 293-6194.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a vertical line followed by a large, stylized 'C' and a horizontal line.

Jim Christiansen
Remedial Project Manager